

Volume 3 Number 4
Nov. 1936

Vanguard

in this issue:

SPAIN IN REVIEW

JOHN L. LEWIS

A Biased Biography

BOLSHEVIK JUSTICE

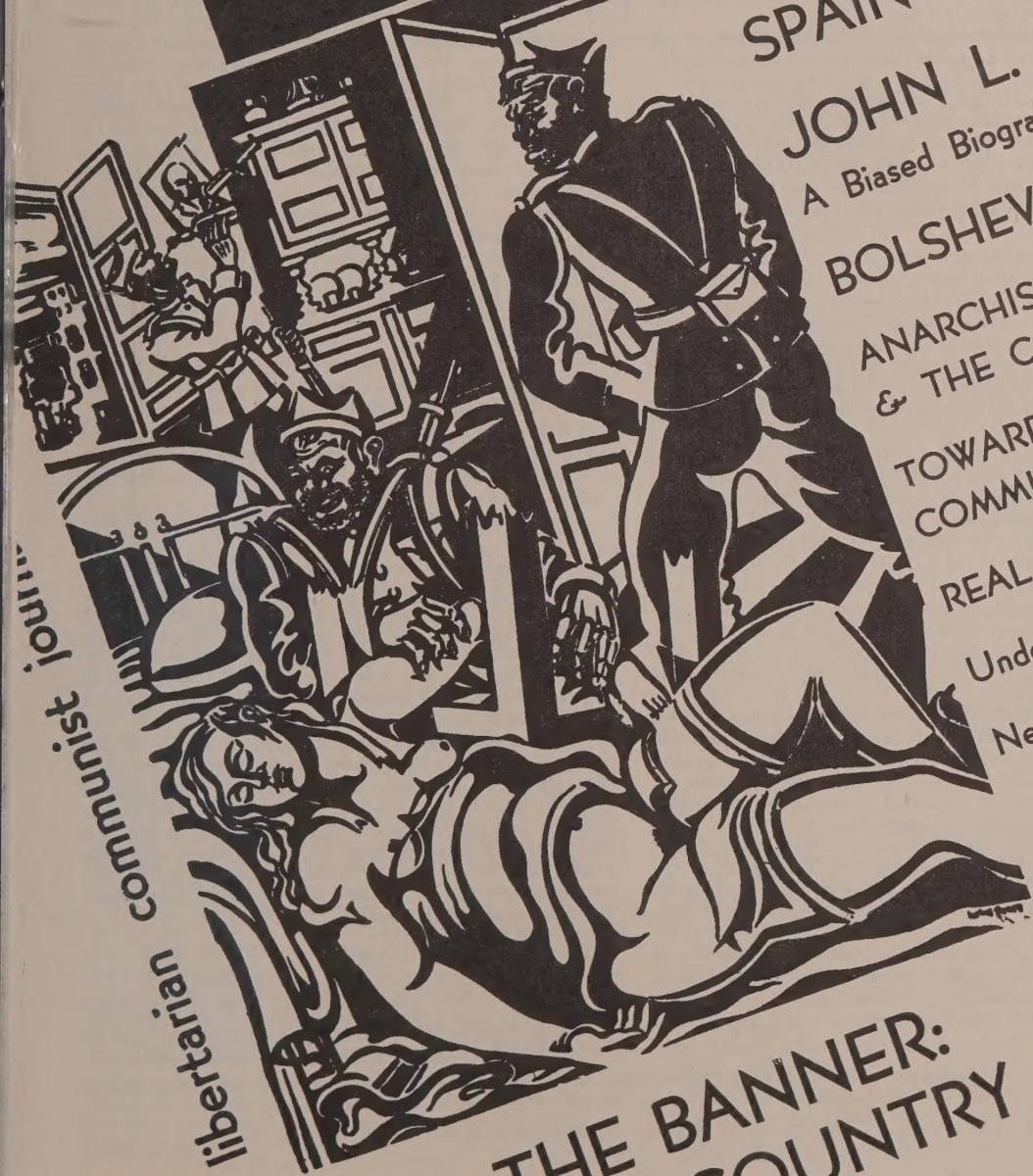
ANARCHISTS
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"WHOM THE GODS WOULD DESTROY..."

This old proverb has proved true in more than one instance in human history. It also applies most forcibly to the political leaders of today. They maintain that neutrality to the heroic struggle of the Spanish masses will stave off a new world conflagration. Now it is only too true that political leaders and statesmen have seldom demonstrated clear thinking when confronted with calamitous issues. But, in their attitude towards the struggle in Spain, the gods seem to have done their job more deliberately than before.

[Were it only a question of a score of politicians one would have no cause for alarm. Unfortunately they are at the helm of state. And their decisions motivated by utter mental confusion as well as criminal wilfulness will not only not prevent a new world carnage. They actually are hastening the new holocaust whose flames are likely to be more devastating than the last.

One might grant the politicians some modicum of reason had they taken a neutral stand against both contending forces in the civil war in Spain. It is the one-sidedness of their attitude which makes one question both the sanity and the integrity of the neutrality sponsors. Their stand is the more reprehensible because the Spanish masses are the first to have risen against the Fascist foe who has already taken root in a large part of Europe and if not stopped, will do so in the rest of the world. Verily the Gods grind slowly but surely.

Hitler and his savage gang found their inning in the utter madness of the so called peace-treaty and their best support in the criminal indifference on the part of all governments to his reign of terror. This and this alone gave National-Socialism time and impetus to perfect the deadly military machine. Not only the Swastika but also Hitler's heavy boot is to be planted on the neck of Europe and Asia, as they have been planted on the neck of the entire hapless German people.

Also, politicians never forget or learn anything. Else they would realize that by their neutrality to the Spanish defenders of liberty they are rendering the Spanish Fascism precisely the same service, they have given to other Fascist powers. They are doing more, they are helping to create a formidable Fascist alliance, that, if successful, would fetter the spirit of freedom for many decades.

Curiously enough the loudest sponsors of neutrality proclaim, that democracy must be maintained at all costs. Yet, they fail to see, that democracy never was in graver danger and that neutrality, if maintained much longer, will stab democracy in the back.

Does any intelligent man or woman imagine that the two star Fascist lords are giving Franco and Mola such generous supports in armaments and money out of love for them? Certainly they have been promised lucrative returns for the co-operation which is to enable Spanish adventurers to drown the Spanish people in a sea of blood. Hitler and Mussolini, whose ambitions are so modest, want a mere bagatelle. Just the largest part of the Mediterranean and the Pyrenees as their bulwark and with their cannons directed on France. This would of course put Hitler and Mussolini in a world key position.

Will France go back on her glorious revolutionary past by her tacit consent to such designs? Will England, with centuries of liberal tradition, acquiesce to such a degrading position. And if not, will that not mean a new world carnage?

In other words, the very thing, the proclaimers of neutrality are hoping to prevent, will occur. And only lack of clear perception can remain blind to its danger. Quite another thing would happen, if the anti-Fascists were helped to cope with the Fascist epidemic in Spain that is poisoning all the springs of life and health. Fascism exterminated in Spain would also mean the purified waters in the rest of Europe and the end of Fascism in Europe would do away with the causes of war. The workers of the rest of the world and other liberty loving groups inspired by the new social experiment of their brothers in Spain would be enabled to begin a new transformation of their own life.

It is about neutrality as it is about people who can stand by a burning building with women and children calling for help, without moving a muscle to come to their aid. Or to see a drowning man desperately trying to reach shore. No words of condemnation could possibly express the universal contempt for such cowardly indifference. Fortunately there are not many such creatures. In time of fire, floods, storms at sea or the sight of any fellow-creatures in distress, human nature usually is at its best. Men in danger to their own lives and limbs rush into burning houses, throw themselves into the foaming sea and bravely carry their brothers to safety.

Spain is in flames, the Fascist conflagration is spreading. Is it possible that the world outside will stand by and see the country laid in ashes by the Fascist hordes? Or will thinking and justice-loving people muster up enough courage to break through the ban of neutrality and come to the rescue of the Spanish people who are fighting Fascism to the bitter end.

I have faith in humanity. I have infinite faith. I know the governments come and go. But the intrinsic quality of human feeling and the sense of justice remains forever.

It is to these that the heroic people of Spain appeal for help, for the means to bring Fascism to its knees and save the world from the new impending holocaust neutrality is certain to bring in its wake.

—EMMA GOLDMAN (Barcelona Sept. 30th)

The faith of Comrade Emma Goldman, the faith of the CNT-FAI, the faith of the entire Spanish proletariat, shedding their life-blood in the struggle for liberty, must and shall be vindicated. We must demand that the democratic countries supply arms to the anti-Fascists; we must cry from the very house-tops: "Down with neutrality that supplies arms to the Fascists".

Meanwhile we, must come to the aid of the Spanish people. We must send them money so that they can purchase **ALL THE THINGS THEY NEED**. There can be no stop to our giving, no limit to our sacrifices as there is no limit to the sacrifices of our Spanish brothers. From these sacrifices a new free world will be built. We have already collected thousands of dollars for the Spanish workers but they need much more.

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Published by the Vanguard Group, 45 W. 17th St., New York City. Subscription in U. S. one dollar (\$1.00) a year (12 issues). Foreign \$1.25. Single copies ten cents.

Volume 3 Number 4

October-November 1936

high lights of the spanish revolution

Months before the outbreak of the Fascist counter-revolution Spain felt the thunder of the approaching storm of bitter class war. The failure of the government's weak-kneed vacillating economic reform measures to improve the lot of the starving peasants, the exploited proletariat and the unemployed intensified the revolutionary ferment among the Spanish masses. By the beginning of July, 1936, over a million workers and peasants were out on strike. The inadequacy of the agrarian reform policy (e. g. government purchase of land to be rented to the peasants), the rising commodity prices which cancelled wage gains made by syndicates, the attempted use of state apparatus to settle labor disputes (mixed labor boards etc.), the failure to provide relief for the unemployed, the failure to weaken the colossal economic power of the church — in a word, a virtual repetition of the 1931 program which was at the bottom of the bloody struggles of the first five years of the republic — all this brought into bolder perspective the revolutionary aims and direction of the masses on the one hand and the reactionary tendencies and plans of the church, the big landowners, finance capital and the military caste on the other.

The Peoples' Front government, supported by the Communist and Socialist parties, was fully aware of the plans of the Fascist army clique to seize power before they might be swept away by the revolutionary tide. Their intentions were so plain that even we in America were able to point them out and warn against them. In June, 1936 we said in VANGUARD ("The Peoples' Front in Action", by Senex) :

In Spain the actual danger of a Fascist upheaval lies in the fact that the military power is lodged in a group that is imbued with the greatest hatred to everything republican and democratic. The army is still controlled by intransigent monarchists and Fascists. On the very eve of the elections that clique made full preparations for the seizure of power. It was checked in its attempt by the fear displayed in the leading industrial and political circles of a vigorous reaction on the part of the revolutionary elements of the country. But it is not disguising its avowed intention to attempt the same under more favorable circumstances.

It was only the anarchists and the anarcho-syndicalists of the CNT and FAI (National Confederation of Labor and the Iberian Anarchist Federation) who called the enraged masses to fight against the Fascist attacks. On April 17 their general strike against Fascist provocations was so propitious that many UGT (General Union of Workers) members struck too. Not only were the government and its marxist supporters helpless against the growing danger of reaction — they tried their best to hinder the militant workers who began to take matters into their own hands. Left-wing papers were censored for printing articles warning of the Fascist plots; strikes were declared illegal; the C. N.T. headquarters in Madrid were closed three times in June and also just before the revolt occurred; landless peasants were prevented by the government from taking the land. In the province of Albicete peasants who attempted to seize land on May 28 were shot down in cold blood by the civil guards who killed 23 of them and wounded many more. But land seizures, open fights with the Fascists and church, strikes and demonstrations grew in number and intensity.

The Communist Party pleaded with the workers to learn "when to end a strike", advised the peasants who seized land to wait until the Peoples' Front government gave it to them legally.

And while these social-democratic defenders of capitalism played their treacherous game, the bishops, the bankers and generals plotted and schemed.

July 26 was the date set for the Fascist putch. But the execution of Calvo Sotelo, Fascist deputy in the Cortes, on July 14 pushed events ahead of schedule. On the 17th all the garrisons in Spanish Morocco were under the control of the army officers commanded by General Francisco Franco. That same day at 9. A. M. the Madrid government was informed of this action by a loyal naval officer. What did it do to prevent the army men from going ahead with their plans? — Nothing! A manifesto of the FAI and CNT urging the workers to take arms against the Fascists was censored from the syndicalist newspaper. The next day (July 18) at 3 P. M., when Seville had already been invaded,

the government issued the following statement:

Thanks to the foresighted means adopted by the authorities, a broad movement of aggression against the republic may be deemed to have been broken up; it has found no assistance on the peninsula and has only succeeded in securing followers in a fraction of the Army in Morocco....

The action of the government will be sufficient to re-establish normality.

These false reassurances, however, failed to halt the timely response of the real enemies of Fascism. On the 18th the workers of Barcelona, inspired by the CNT and FAI, which had already prepared armed defenses, took possession of arms depots and arsenals. Militant youth of Madrid distributed arms and set up barricades. The next day, while the politicians were busy forming a new cabinet under the premiership of Barrios, a right-wing republican, the reactionary army officers began to set up their own bloody rule in every important city in Spain. And the government was virtually prepared to give them Spain!

What was it that prevented complete success for the Fascists? The government, even if it so desired, could not stop them because it had no army and the last thing it would wish to do was to arm the proletariat. The latter did not wait for such action but spontaneously battled the Fascists, even with kitchen knives and bare hands. When on July 20th a new premier, Giral, was named, the government reluctantly distributed some arms in Madrid — first to socialists, then to communists and finally, in small quantities, to the anarchists and syndicalists.

By this time, armed clashes were taking place throughout the country and the first chapter of the counter-revolution, one can say, was written. The battle lines were marked. The whole region of Catalonia where the CNT - FAI predominates was in the hands of the armed workers and peasants. Valencia was cleared of Fascists. In Madrid and the surrounding territory the Fascists were soon to be crushed. Also in the northwest, they were defeated except in Oviedo where they were too strongly fortified. On the eastern coast, the loyal sailors under the influence of the CNT marine unions who took command of the ships from their officers, saved the situation. The reactionaries, however, controlled Seville, Saragossa (the site of the military academy and one of the strongest natural fortresses in Europe) Cordoba, Granada, Burgos, Navarre and Old Castille and several agricultural sections.

With the government almost stripped of its *de facto* power, Spain entered the second phase of the civil war, the *revolutionary offensive* against the legions of reaction.

What was the nature of this offensive and what made possible the rise of the only kind of real defense against reaction, a revolutionary counter-offense?

The answer to this question is not a matter of academic theorizing. This answer contains a living, burning lesson which the libertarian movement in Spain is writing on the blood-stained pages of contemporary Spanish history, a lesson which is penetrating the minds of an ever increasing number of workers the world over.

The only way to fight Fascism is to take from those who would bludgeon the toiling masses under the iron heel of reactionary dictatorship, all their wealth and power; to be ready to give this wealth and its administration to its rightful owners, the workers and peasants; to arm these true anti-Fascists so that the protection of their lives, liberties and well-being is in their own hands.

Whereas other political groups began to realize this only when it was taking place in the struggle itself, the libertarian movement of Spain (FAI and CNT) had not merely preached this long before the civil war had begun; the libertarian movement owed its existence to the fact that it was striving towards this goal during its many years of struggle, that these aims were incorporated in its organizational structure and constituted the basis for all its actions.

In the region of Catalonia, as soon as victory over the Fascists was in sight, the CNT and FAI began the formation of a unified anti-Fascist militia based upon the cooperation of the various anti-Fascist defense cadres that had sprung up. To co-ordinate these various forces, a "Central Committee of Anti-Fascist Militias" was formed consisting of fifteen members.

These forces were released by the victory in Catalonia to various fronts in that sector at first (Saragossa, Aragon, etc.). Later they moved further south to surround and finally bottle up the Fascist strongholds of Cordoba and Granada.

Such remarkable strides, even more striking considering the fact that they had so few arms while their adversaries were being constantly supplied with artillery, airplanes, money by Portugal, Germany, Italy and French Morocco, could not have been made without the magnificent work of economic reconstruction by workers and peasants of the region. At first, the CNT unions seized control of transportation facilities, communications and food-stuffs. Just as in the beginning of the revolt it was the resolute action of the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists which struck the first blow against the reaction and inspired other unions and parties to join with them, so also in the equally necessary task of keeping the wheels of industry running without danger of sabotage, in the task of making the proper revolutionary changes in economic relationships, the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists were in the vanguard. Because of the realistic anarchist program calling for seizure of industry, transportation, and agriculture by the workers and peasants, the years of planning and struggle by the CNT-FAI, to achieve that end, they were in a position to start things going in that direction and effect the unity of all working class organizations in Catalonia in the work of socializing the economic life of the region, a phase of the struggle which is absolutely necessary in order to consolidate the victory over Fascism. Here indeed, was the real "united front", unity in revolutionary action, on the barricades, in the streets, in the fields and factories!

Nor did all the socialist workers in the U.G.T. wait for their leaders to give them orders to take control of factories or transportation lines. Spurred on by the example of the CNT workers they did likewise. Within a few weeks all the transportation

lines, public utilities, large industries and big estates were no longer in the hands of the bourgeoisie; the worker's organizations, with the aid of technicians (whom the CNT policy of giving them an equal share in the reconstruction of the new life had won over to their ranks) are the masters of economic and social life in Catalonia. Coordination of the various and complex administrative management and distribution duties is achieved through the Economic Council, a body composed mainly of representatives from the CNT and UGT. (There is one delegate from the Catalanian Generalidad, but he functions merely as a rubber stamp.)

While in Catalonia, the government virtually abdicated to give rise to a "dual power", that of the organized working class, the relationship of forces in the rest of the country was not quite the same. The "dual power" which succeeded in throwing the Fascist plans out of gear was unable, in those sections of the country under the control of the Madrid government, to assert itself with such vigor as in Catalonia. The Giral cabinet, succeeding Barrios after twenty-four hours, did receive the unqualified support of the reformist Socialists and Communists but was too weak-willed and passive to unify and direct the various workers' and militia columns, the only real opposition to the enemy. With no well-organized fighting force and insufficient arms (all their "friends" were neutral) to stem the hordes of Fascists and Moors coming up towards Madrid from Morocco thru Seville, Franco's legions made rapid progress. After capturing Badajos where 4,000 men, women and children perished in one of the most cold-blooded massacres in history, Franco soon came far enough north to form, with his northwestern column from Burgos, a semicircle around Madrid in preparation for the final attack on the capital.

The fall of Irun to the Fascists and their steady march towards the capital frightened Madrid into making the socialist leader, Largo Caballero, premier with a Peoples' Front cabinet. Unfortunately this set-up was not much of an improvement over the former one — after Irun the Fascists reconquered San Sebastian and Franco with the assistance of Hitler, Mussolini and Portugal came closer to Madrid, raised the siege of the Alcazar and finally entered Toledo.

Even before Caballero became premier, the anarcho-syndicalist CNT and the FAI pressed for a program similar to that of Catalonia and Valencia. While cooperating fully with all anti-Fascist elements, they realized that the only way there could be a real will to fight and proper coordination and planning of the defenses was to give the syndicates representation on the councils of war so as to place upon the worker's organizations the responsibility for defense, and to put economic life mainly under the direction of the two big trade union bodies. They even expressed willingness to work together with the government on such a program. At first the Communists and Socialists condemned this program; it was only their numerous defeats and the gradual realization of the effectiveness of such a program, as demonstrated by Catalonia, (which is sending more and more militiamen to help Madrid)

that led them to change their minds. Over a week ago the cabinet, after long conferences with a CNT committee agreed to adopt many of the measures proposed by the anarchists (exactly to what extent we do not know yet). A "Defense Junta" was formed which included delegates from the C.N.T. and U.G.T. The effect was encouraging. In a day or two the militia was reorganized, all able-bodied men were required to be ready for service and a military campaign of offensive was begun. The latest setbacks of the Fascists near the Toledo and other fronts bear eloquent testimony as to the results of the new set-up. Pierre Van Paassen, Federated Press correspondent, cabled the following from Madrid on October 12th:

The workers themselves are taking the initiative. Revolutionary committees are being set up everywhere. People's tribunals have found those guilty of fomenting the rebellion, its financiers and auxiliaries, and have begun to mete out punishment within a week after being set up, whereas the Giral government hesitated for weeks to proceed against the plotters and their agents.

Now the landed estates which the successive liberal governments hesitated to confiscate are at last passing into the hands of the peasants. These are preliminary conditions to the victory against the hirelings of Hitler and Mussolini who are swarming over the land, burning, looting and massacring as they go. It was impossible to arouse the workers for a return to the status quo. Now they know what they are fighting for.

Right now the possibilities of defeating the Fascists are better than at any time in the past two months: The heroic miners in Asturias have almost completely recaptured Oviedo and may soon be able to assist in the Bilbao and Madrid sectors. In the Madrid sector the militia is functioning better than ever before. Victory for the Catalanian columns is in sight and they may soon be able to send even more men to Madrid. The problem of securing sufficient and proper war materials (so treacherously withheld from them by their ostensible friends, France, England and the Soviet Union) is gradually being solved by the Catalanian workers who, by virtue of the fact that they control the factories themselves, have with miraculous skill and unbelievable rapidity created a new defense industry producing guns, tanks, ammunition, etc. in metal shops, auto plants and other such factories.

The longer Madrid can hold out against the Fascist bloodhounds, the better the chances of finally crushing them. This will not only mean that for the first time since the advent of Fascism the black forces of reaction shall have been repulsed — it will mean that the new life which the toilers of Catalonia are creating shall take root all over Spain. The glorious accomplishments of the revolutionists in this region are but the beginnings of a new, a libertarian social order wherein, for the first time in history, we shall see the realization of the hopes of oppressed humanity, of the dreams of countless thousands who have struggled and suffered and died for the cause of liberty. And the liberation of Spain shall be the signal for toilers the world over to shake off their own chains of poverty, tyranny and oppression.

—S. MORRISON

anarchist position on C.I.O.

There was a time when the bourgeois liberal parties of the autocratic countries pinned their hopes upon crown princes who in their youth showed some feeble signs of liberal sympathies. Those hopes would not last much beyond the period of assumption of power by those very princes who in most cases would prove to be worse reactionaries than their fathers.

Nevertheless the same comedy would be enacted time and time again in each and every country. A serious movement representing the intellectual flower of the nation would suddenly become strangely oblivious of elementary political realities, of the most recent historical lessons. Instead of relying upon its own strength, upon its power to lead the masses in a resolute struggle against absolutism, it would be suddenly caught up by one of those fantastic illusions that really belong to the field of social pathology.

The kind of illusions entertained now by some anarchists in this country in regard to the so-called industrial union movement headed by Lewis and Co. are of the same pathological kind. They cannot be treated as serious questions of anarchist tactics: they are danger signs showing that all is not well with us. They are the logical outcome of a deeply erroneous tactic in regard to the A. F. of L. unions adopted by some anarchists not as a result of conscious planning but of hopeless drifting into an effortless line of least resistance.

Anarchists in their attitude toward unions differ fundamentally from any other revolutionary movement of the political school. The latter, revolutionary as it might be in some respects, always considered the unions of secondary importance as compared with political parties. The work of such revolutionaries consisted in bringing the unions in line with the party. They were to become the transmission links between the party, the chief instrumentality of revolutionary work, and the great masses of workers. Hence the concentration of efforts upon capturing the union apparatus with the present bureaucracy if it proves to be tractable enough; against it if the party revolutionaries meet too great resistance on its part.

With anarchists the entire nature of their work in the unions assumes an altogether different aspect. The anarchists regard the unions as the basic cells of a new social order. This task therefore consists not in capturing the union apparatus but in changing deeply the structure of the union and the character of its activity. The union must become a fit instrumentality of the great revolutionary change to come. That means that the union must be rebuilt upon altogether new principles, imbued with a new spirit of revolutionary solidarity and in the first place it must be rid of the leprosy of bureaucracy now distorting its nature into the very opposite of what unionism stands for. A union that does not embody in its structure and actual practice

the basic principles of fullest democracy and worker's solidarity, a union that permits monstrous inequalities in the pay of workers and officials, that allows the economic centralization of power in the hands of the bureaucracy, a union of that kind is much more liable to develop into a Fascist corporation than into an organic cell of the reconstructed society. And no change of leadership will change matters in that respect. A union of that kind falling into the hands of Marxist revolutionaries is no more fit for the role of an active agency of social reconstruction than a reactionary union of the A. F. of L. type. The role assigned to it is of the known kind; an insignificant screw in the totalitarian apparatus of the Socialist state. And, of course, anarchist control of the bureaucratic apparatus, were such a thing possible in a union based upon anti-anarchist principles, would lead to the same distortion of the basic aims of revolutionary unionism.

Those are elementary ideas with the anarchists all over the world. But somehow they were ignored by quite a considerable number of anarchists working in local unions of the A. F. of L. They somehow let themselves drift into the comfortable position of working with the bureaucratic apparatus instead of fighting for principles of revolutionary unionism. They let themselves be taken in by the hue and cry against dual unionism, the cry of all the reactionary elements within the unions who play upon the sentiments of union loyalty only so far as it suits their own egoistic group interests.

The theory behind this comfortable position of the anarchists is that sometime the progressive element will be able to oust the reactionary leadership, and when that happens, the anarchists will play their proper role in it. But what is generally lost sight of is that the process of dissolution and decay set up by the bureaucratic distortion of the unions is dynamic in its nature. It has a tendency to grow in scope and in tempo. It does not wait for the progressive forces to gather sufficient power. It is driving the unions, to an inner explosion and those anarchists that do not orientate their work upon the inevitability of such an explosion are forsaking the basic ideas of our doctrine in regard to the place and role of the unions in this revolutionary struggle.

To be prepared for that explosion means first of all to be able to hold up a model of revolutionary unionism before the eyes of the workers when the moment of the explosion arrives. It does not mean forsaking the present work in the reactionary unions, but giving this work a definite orientation in the direction of building up a new type of unionism. It means also the most resolute break with the union bureaucracy regardless of whatever name and ideology it may swear by. It is the building up of cadres of militants within the unions capable of wresting the union from the hands of the bureaucracy, that the anarchist must have chiefly in mind

in his work in the unions.

Viewed in this light the blossoming of maudlin hopes among some anarchists in connection with the so called industrial-union drive is nothing short of dismaying. It isn't only the caliber of the so called union leaders who are heading this drive that makes any hopes placed upon the movement seem to fall in the same class as those within the old time liberal by the crown prince mumbling a few progressive phrases. It is the disingenuousness of this movement (as has already been proven by the love feast between Dubinsky and Green), the lack of genuine militancy, the patent political purposes and what's more, the mechanical, purely bureaucratic nature of this drive, it is all that which should put any militant on guard against any claims set up by the publicity departments of those unions. A new unionism will not spring up as a result of those puny efforts. The militancy of the great mass of unorganized workers will be stifled from the very beginning and whatever may be accomplished in respect of adding to the number of already organized industries will be distorted by the monstrous centralization of power in the hands of an irresponsible bureaucracy. Were they even to succeed in

building up an industrial union, it would hardly present any great advantage over the old craft union. As it was pointed out by Comrade Pierre Ramus, the Austrian Fascist unions in the structural sense represent a step forward as compared with the socialist trade unions. And with all that they represent the greatest mockery of the idea of unionism. Would an industrial union organized by the Lewis machine and run along the same autocratic lines as the United Mine Workers of America be more of a bulwark against Fascist danger than the craft union run by avowed Fascists of the Hutcherson type?

At no other period in the life of the American labor movement was the need of a new revolutionary unionism felt more keenly than now. Only clearer than ever does the idea always upheld by anarchists stand out: revolutionary unions cannot be built from the top. They must come as a result of a great mass upsurge prepared by a long process of militant struggle on the part of the revolutionary minority, a struggle which precludes any compromise with the bureaucratic element, the first to be swept out by the new forces to come.

elections -- the long range view

Like all other phases of the present day social struggle the presidential elections of 1936 admit a twofold evaluation: one that is based upon a close range view of its immediate consequences and possibilities, and the other — the long range view of the general tendency of the political situation.

Viewed at a close range the presidential election represents a situation not unlike the one created in all those countries where the popular front came into existence. The intensification of the class struggle brought about by the progressive deterioration of the capitalist economy led to a sharp division of political forces into the right and left camps. Elections are no more fought on insubstantial issues between forces hardly demarcated from each other as was the case throughout the period of prosperity and which was even true to a great extent in 1932. The social reforms undertaken by the Roosevelt administration met the growing resistance of the economic oligarchy which for years reigned supreme in the political life of the country. Toward the end of the present presidential term this resistance solidified the most influential sections of the bourgeoisie into one reactionary block swinging further and further away from the traditional allegiance to the principles of bourgeois democracy.

This in turn produced an equal consolidation of forces of the opposite pole of political life. The support rallying around president Roosevelt in the presidential election is about the same in its social make-up as the one that went to build up the People's Front in some European countries. The same social make-up and the same issues are the focal points of the present elections, although, taking into the view the greater intensity of social struggle in the European countries, the political differentiation and the issues fought about stand out in greater relief than here in the United States. But in its main features the struggle is the same: it begins to revolve more and more around the defense of the basic features of modern democracy against the ever

growing onslaughts of a consolidated reactionary block.

Does it mean that this issue is going to be decided by the election ballot? Will this ever growing struggle come to an end with the decisive victory of the democratic element at this election? Will it be as decisive in this respect as the election of Andrew Jackson in signifying the triumph of the new democratic forces surging forward to the control of American life?

It is here that the close range view fails entirely to give a true evaluation of the perspectives of the struggles now emerging to the forefront of the elections. It is true that large and important issues are being fought over right now during these elections. It is a mistake to say that the latter are utterly of no importance, that it won't make any difference whether Landon or Roosevelt will be elected. The election of the first will doubtlessly initiate a course of reaction compared to which the Harding and Coolidge period was the height of democratic liberalism. It is also clear that for the time being the forces of democracy and liberalism of the country will score an important victory and that the reactionary tendencies will be considerably checked. Will this victory though be of any duration? Will it orientate American life upon as firm a democratic basis as the victories of liberal forces in the past crucial periods of American history?

To believe so is entirely to misunderstand the nature of the economic and social crises into which this country is plunging as well as the rest of the world. The crisis can no more be overcome by the makeshift program of the New Deal than the social crisis of Spain was checked by the Peopoles' Front. And as a matter of fact very few people believe that it will succeed in doing so. The program of social security must necessarily crack up under the strain of growing financial difficulties. The attempt to regulate economic life against the wishes of the ruling oligarchy will meet an ever stiffening resistance on the part of the latter,

(continued on page 15)

towards libertarian communism

Until the October revolution socialism was generally thought of as a distant ideal, leading the daily struggles of the working class but not facing it as an immediate possibility. Although embraced as a guiding faith by the ever growing mass movements of the international proletariat, it was nowhere accepted as an actual task of immediate importance, to be formulated and fought for like any other practical problem of the day. "Socialism for our times" was the slogan of a few sectarian groups, but not of any mass movement of importance, sufficiently strong to impress its will upon the trend of events.

In the more backward countries this prevailing attitude took the form of a belief current among socialists that socialism can emerge as an immediate task of realization only when the country has ripened for it through successive stages of political revolutions and economic development along the lines of capitalist democracy. In accordance with this belief the socialist movements of those countries centered their attention upon preparing those allegedly necessary conditions for the realization of socialism. The emphasis was placed upon the struggle for political democracy, which for all practical purposes made the socialist program indistinguishable from that of any democratic party of the bourgeoisie. The difference lay in the evaluation of an admittedly distant ideal, which the latter rejected even for the future, while the socialist advocated some version of it for the time to come. This time was relegated to a period looming far ahead of the actual needs of the present generation and needing therefore no special concern outside of a general line of orientation in the spirit of its basic principles.

Nor was this attitude confined to the socialist movement of the backward countries. The specific reasons for relegating the struggle for socialism to a more distant period differed in the advanced countries, but the results were the same. The preoccupation of the socialist parties with parliamentary activity led to the acceptance of the Fabian view which conceived the socialist ideal as the sum total of gradual reforms consisting in the growing interference of the State in the economic life of the country. The realization of socialism ceased to be a task distinct in itself, but became merged in the current political and trade-union activity, both of which were deeply set within the framework of capitalistic realities.

This was true of the socialist movement as a whole, regardless of whether it spoke the language of Marxist orthodoxy or that of Fabian reformism. Theoretically the orthodox Marxist conceived the struggle for socialism as a distant task growing out of the inevitable collapse of capitalism, but the logic of parliamentary activity proved to be much stronger than any theoretical assumptions. The total disuse into which revolutionary activity had fallen among the Marxists of the Second Inter-

national rendered them incapable of framing any bold policies of socialistic reconstruction in accordance with their theoretical premises, as a result of which socialism in their conception began to lose the sharp outlines of a tangible historic task. "Socialism is not an end purpose, but a movement" — this idea which shocked so much the Marxist world when first propounded by the revisionists became to be tacitly accepted by the entire socialist movement of the Second International toward the outbreak of the World War.

There were, of course, important minorities which rebelled against this fading out of the socialist ideal from the vista of concrete historic tasks. Such were, for instance, the small but growing left wing of the social-democratic parties and the anarcho-syndicalists of Latin countries, both of whom raised the banner of revolt against the dominant attitude toward socialism as a distant ideal. But for all their growing influence those minorities still proved to be too weak to effect any basic changes in the general reformist trend of labor activities. The social-democratic "left wingers" confined their work to theoretical criticism, while the great mass struggles carried on by the anarcho-syndicalists, important as they were for that period in arousing the militancy of the workers, never reached the stage of genuine revolutionary movements. The objectives of such struggles were those of a militant trade unionism, and it is only when viewed in a sufficiently broad perspective that those struggles could be regarded as preludes to the revolutionary realization of the socialist ideal. Given a longer course of development, the growing sweep and intensity of militant strikes and other forms of mass struggles carried on by the anarchists would inevitably create a revolutionary situation, with socialist objectives emerging as actual tasks of the day.

However, none of the anarcho-syndicalist mass movements of the pre-war period ever reached that final stage. The mass inertia generated by a relatively progressive development of the pre-war society was too strong to be overcome by purely subjective efforts of militant minorities. Great historic events, unloosing elemental forces in action, were necessary in order to effect any basic change in the prevailing attitude of the great mass of people. And therein lies the particular significance of our epoch as distinguished from the one that was brought to a close by the World War: it was ushered in and is dominated by great events which reshifted the axis of the historic struggles of the day in the direction of socialism.

Three momentous shifts have taken place during the recent period, each one of which worked profound revolutionary changes in the general orientation of social struggles. The first, and most important one, was the October revolution. The epochal significance of that great revolution, like

that of the French revolution, lies not so much in its immediate effects as in the reshifting of the center of social struggles around a new focal task. In the French revolution it was political democracy that emerged as such a central task to be realized by the great movements to come. The powerful lever of the October revolution performed the same service in regard to the socialist ideal. For the first time in history socialism was cast athwart the marching progress of humanity not merely as an inspiring idea but as an *actual* force, uprooting, destroying, building and rebuilding. And how deeply that affected the attitude of the average man toward the socialist ideal is now a matter of simple historical record, acknowledged alike by the enemies and friends of the revolution.

The significance of this was obscured for the time being by the temporary reaction produced among the workers in the Western countries of Europe by the kind of socialism that began to crystallize in Soviet Russia. The distortions suffered by the socialist ideal in its refractions through the specific conditions of Russian life acted as a temporary check to the spreading of the revolutionary influences of October. For the time being the forces of inertia, as embodied in the social-democratic parties of the Second International, seemed to have been able to reverse the clock of history. Socialism was again relegated to the position of a mere backdrop for practical activities continued along the lines of the pre-war period. And had it not been for the successive shocks of a tremendous economic and political crisis, these forces of inertia would have had a much longer run than the few years of relative stabilization in Western Europe. It would have taken, perhaps, a whole generation or more to reveal the process of erosion taking place within those seeming bulwarks of democratic progress. As it is, the denouement came so close upon the heels of this temporary reaction that even we today are prone to forget about the fact that such an interval of temporary stabilization ever existed. And now the spirit of the October revolution is again haunting the civilized world, the struggle for socialism has entered into the decisive phase — those are the direct results of the other two great cataclysmic factors determining the general character and trend of our epoch.

The great economic crisis blasted away the myth of a stabilized capitalism sedulously cultivated by the international social-democracy. It took the wind from under its sails, reducing it to the state of a helplessly foundering political bankrupt. Its hodgepodge of petty political and economic reforms, calculated for the period of stabilization, was dwarfed into wretched and tragi-comic insignificance in face of the economic catastrophe. Not being able to direct the rising social ferment into revolutionary channels, it began to lose the mass moorings by which it was rooted to social actualities. And an uprooted social-democracy meant not only a clear passage for the Fascist forces, but also the removal of the greatest obstacle to a revolutionary approach to the problems of socialist reconstruction, the imminence of which has been rendered by the Fascist victories.

The struggle against Fascism is necessarily a struggle for a new social order — this is now rapidly becoming the conviction not only of the so called radical movement, but of the wide circles of anti-Fascists aroused by the danger of annihilation of cultural values. And if they do not realize that very clearly now, they must come to it in the course of their struggles against Fascism, during which they will find themselves pitted against the real sources of strength of the Fascist movement. In every Fascist and semi-Fascist country the task of social liberation becomes closely interwoven with that of political emancipation. And even in the so-called democratic countries the momentum of the struggle against the ever growing Fascist danger will carry the broad front of anti-Fascist forces much beyond the vacuous slogans of the so-called People's Front. In France (In Spain it has already become a reality), and perhaps very soon in the United States and England, the struggle against Fascism will be carried over from the purely political issues of safeguarding democratic liberties to that of deep going social changes of a revolutionary nature. The collapse of Fascism in Germany — and that it is heading toward some sort of catastrophe no objective observer of European political life can deny — will not only bring to the fore revolutionary social forces, but will place the country before the most confused and entangled social realities, the straightening out of which will necessitate profound social changes in accordance with the humanitarian features of the socialist ideal. Socialism for our times, for our own generation, socialism as an actual task to be fought for like the eight hour day was fought for a generation ago — that is the central issue of all the movements and struggles that are carried on at the present moment and will be carried on for the next decade or two.

That means that a new alignment of forces is bound to take place in accordance with the central position now gradually assumed by the struggles for the realization of socialism. The old set-up, built around the issues of political democracy and social reforms within the political and economic frame of capitalism, is rapidly breaking down before our eyes. The right, center and left positions are now being occupied by altogether different social forces with different tendencies and aspirations. This process of reshifting is still in its initial phase of development, but already its outlines are beginning to take visible shape.

A new right is being forged by this process — a solid block of counter-revolutionary forces, swallowing up all the bourgeois parties (and even including part of labor bureaucracy and socialists *à la* Mac Donald), marching under the Fascist slogans of checking the inevitable course of events toward the realization of socialism. The new center is also rapidly becoming a political reality. The shattering of democratic illusions is driving the bulk of socialist parties along the revolutionary road, where, joined with the communist parties, it will form the new powerful block of center parties. And while it may take a more discerning eye to descry the

outlines of the new left, its emergence is already an historic fact. Libertarian communism, as opposed to the dictatorial socialism of the center, has already moved into the position of an actual force. In Spain it is a tremendous factor to be reckoned with in the immediate struggles, and in the other countries, especially those permeated with libertarian traditions, such as France, England and America, it is bound to appear as a powerful left in the process of struggle for the realization of socialism. And like every genuine left it will represent

the historic progress, the demands of the future upon the present, the deeper logic of the socialist ideal in its unfoldment.

What are the root sources of the strength of this emerging movement, what are the composite elements of which it is liable to be made up? What line of development is it bound to follow in order to shed the last vestiges of utopianism still clinging to it from the last period?

(To be continued)

—SENEX

the soviet executions

St. Tropez, August 25, 1936

I happen to know most of the men accused. And I can assure you that they are not counter revolutionists. Nor is it possible that they should have had dealings with the Gestapo. True, I have always maintained that the real counter revolutionists are the Bolsheviks themselves because they more than the interventionists and the real enemies of the revolution have crushed it. Considered from this angle, Zinoviev and his comrades are as much counter revolutionist as Stalin and his crew. But they are certainly not what they are charged by their accusers. It is too preposterous to believe this charge for one single moment.

That they have conspired to get rid of Stalin and his satellites is probably true. Their conspiracy was of the same nature as any court intrigue that transpired in history time on end. But I am certain it was to serve no other purpose, none of the enemies of Russia, except their own hunger for power. They wanted to get rid of Stalin because they were so damned sure that they would rule Russia wiser and better. In other words the lust for power motivated them as it motivates Stalin. To be sure when they were at the helm they did exactly like Stalin, with their opponents. Even under Lenin, with his knowledge and consent, the Kronstadt sailors were exterminated because Lenin saw in their protest a menace to his power. They exterminated fourteen thousand men, women and children ruthlessly and without mercy. So there is nothing new in the method the present ruler of Russia is using.

You may well ask why this whole cruel spectacle at this time when the masses in Spain are fighting for their lives and their ideal of freedom? There are several reasons for that. First of all it is because the Trozkists have gained considerable strength in some parts of Spain and it might mean Trotsky's leadership in case of a victory over the reactionary forces. That would of course also have revived Trotsky's influence and prestige in Russia. Hence the need of discrediting him and all those recently connected with him.

That is, however, only one reason for the extermination of Stalin's erstwhile comrades. Another is the growing unrest in Russia, the daily

outbreaks against the ruthless machine. Naturally, Stalin needs an outlet for the pent up feelings of the masses. The so-called Constitution is to serve as the bait. And the circus performance of the trial is another. It is to make the workers think that Russia is in danger from the indicted men. To paint them as black as Hell, that they may the easier be disposed of.

Well, Stalin's part is hideous enough but the cringing, cowardly stand of the accused is more so. No doubt they have been tortured and their confession wrung from them by fiendish means. Torture in the Tcheka was a daily occurrence when we were in Russia. It has been perfected to an art since. Not merely were the 16 men tortured but their confessions and their speeches were prepared for them. These cowards will find that there is no promise the Stalin regime will feel bound to keep. They themselves never kept a promise. They will be shot in spite of their cringing accusation. But it is a commentary on the emasculation of the old guard that the Soviet regime has performed. Their yellow stand, their Judas betrayal of their own co-workers is unlike anything that had ever happened under the tsar. Yes, there were occasional spies, Azev and many lesser ones. But the horrible weakness of the Zinovievs and their followers is unique in the history of Revolutionists. It is more than disgraceful, and what is more it will not save them.

There is one bright ray in the darkest of recent pictures. It is the vindication of the Anarchists. Our position as regards power and dictatorship has been strengthened by the events in Russia. All the people in the dock began their lives with an ideal for which they had suffered prison, exile, katorga. No sooner did they ascend to power than their past was wiped out and they became as savage in the persecution of their opponents as the enemies they came to destroy. For nothing so corrupts and disintegrates as power.

—EMMA GOLDMAN

P. S. — Since this was written Stalin's orders were carried out. Sixteen of the old Bolshevik guard, the very flower one might say, of the party, have been shot. It is too horrible to even think of the brutal deed.

john l. lewis -- new messiah

A new star has risen in the labor firmament! A burly giant walks the earth who will lead the oppressed peoples of the American working class out of their dank marshes of craft unionism into the bright new shiny day of industrial unionism. The entire labor and liberal press is strangely unanimous in broadcasting this news. The Communist press in America, which they tell me, at one time rather disliked John L. Lewis, now falls all over itself in an effort to print new bouquets of praise for the Master.

Mr. Benjamin Stolberg, a labor journalist, wasted a good share of three issues of THE NATION to whitewash Mr. Lewis. We learn from Mr. Stolberg that John L. is a bit rough and tough but, after all, it's American to be rough and tough, and besides the American workers need a "strong man" to lead them.

Mr. Stolberg knows the truth about Lewis (he fought against Lewis during the 'Save the Union Period' in the U.M.W.A.)... perhaps Mr. Stolberg has what Vincent Sheehan, under the influence of Deborin, calls the "long view". Mr. Lewis is going to be a big man in America. It is likely that those whom he feels are his friends will not fare so badly when he has arrived. Or perhaps it was out of respect for the nerves of THE NATION'S readers that Benjamin Stolberg held back the truth.

The real story of Lewis' career is hard on the ganglia of sensitive people.

Our tale starts in Panama, Illinois, where the Lewises fared very well. There was a fairly strong local of the United Mine Workers of America in Panama. Apparently it was officered almost entirely by Lewises and as soon as John L. was old enough he took his place at the side of his kinfolk. All went splendidly until an auditor named Schaefer, employed by District 12 Executive Board, happened along to examine the books of the Panama local. The Executive Board made a more complete investigation and ordered that the Lewises make full restitution of the money looted from the union treasury.

After this exposure the name of Lewis was poison to the miners of Panama and Lewis had to seek elsewhere for a job. He hit upon the idea of becoming Secretary-Treasurer of District 12 of the U.M.W.A. which post was vacant at the time. He managed to place his name on the ballot but lost in a landslide. He popped up again like a jack-in-the-box when the next election rolled around. He apparently, really wanted to be Secretary-Treasurer of a nice big treasury like that of District 12. Again he went down to a sad defeat. The third time the miners laughed and called him the "Panama Mauler" but they didn't elect him.

Finally, however, he landed a job. Tom Myerscough, one time president of the now defunct National Miner's Union, in his excellent pamphlet, THE NAME IS LEWIS — JOHN L., explains this happening in the following way:

"John H. Walker, at that time president of District 12, U.M.W.A. was quite annoyed with the persistence of Lewis's quest for office, so he wrote to Samuel Gompers, suggesting that in return for the support Sammy and his policies had received from him for so long, he wanted an appointment for the pest, John L. Lewis. He did not care what sort of a job Gompers would give the 'Blankety-blank son-of-a-sea-cook Lewis' just so he got the hell out of Illinois.

"Gompers, realizing the need for support in his own off-challenged position, decided to give Lewis a job. The place was Pittsburg. The job, to organize steel workers".

He started from scratch and accomplished what the A. F. of L. leadership considered the impossible... he organized steel workers! Soon the steel bosses found that they

could not bulldoze Lewis. But there are more ways than one to skin a labor leader.

The fiscal agent of the U. S. Steel Corporation was Alexander R. Hamilton. After John's first misstep (he was charged with having endorsed a check made out to him by Hamilton), which put him in the power of this Machiavellian character, Hamilton's fine Italian hand was easily discernible in all of Lewis' moves. It was not the votes of the miners that carried Lewis to the Presidency of the U.M.W. A. but Alexander R. Hamilton.

After Hamilton put an end to Lewis' career as a steel organizer he decided to use him in his campaign for control of the U.M.W.A. He arranged a meeting for Lewis. An eyewitness, quoted in Myerscough's pamphlet, gives us the following account of the meeting which took place in the back room of a saloon:

"In that back room were all the local fakers of the U. M.W.A. — the Van Bittner gang. They were already on the Hamilton payroll. Hamilton came forward to greet Lewis and assured him that the 'boys' were O.K. and that he would be too — if he would play ball with the gang."

In 1916, Hamilton found his opportunity to slip Lewis into the U.M.W.A. At this period there was a tremendous rank-and-file reaction against the Van Bittner gang in Pittsburg.

Van Bittner's defeat was certain and Hamilton found his chance to use Lewis now to good advantage. One of the Board members, by some curious accident, became indisposed and Lewis was thrown in to fill the gap. Hamilton depended upon Lewis to turn the tables, to quiet the insurgents and assure the replacement of Van Bittner and Hanaway, his chief lieutenant, with another nice "safe" leadership. And he did! Lewis, as chairman and spokesman for the "Commission of Five" saw to it that Phillip Murray, and an ex-cop, Robert Gibbons, were stuck into the gaps left vacant by Van Bittner and Hanaway. The miners did not discover how they had been hoaxed until Van Bittner was appointed "special representative to the International President" and Hanaway made "Provisional President" of the Southern West Virginia District No. 29.

Through his heroic efforts in the 1916 convention Lewis was taken off the general A. F. of L. payroll and given a job with the U.M.W.A. as business manager of the U.M. W.A. journal. Hamilton was a genius. Lewis was on the road to the top, and giving him a magazine to advertise himself with was not a bad way to start.

Then came the war and Lewis made the most of it. The International President of the U.M.W.A. went off to war to be the labor adviser of War Emergency Fuel Commission.

With White off to the war, Frank J. Hayes, the vice-president stepped up into the Presidency. The Executive Board then selected a new Vice-President, John L. Lewis....

Lewis was now almost to the top, without benefit of ballot.

How Lewis and Hamilton disposed of Hayes is an almost unbelievable story. William Z. Foster in relating the story in his MISLEADERS OF LABOR calls it a "Borgian Stratagem". Hayes was an honest but weak man much admired by the miners. He was coerced into going with a delegation to Paris to "forge a link between the soldiers in France and the industrial soldiers at home" (an idea of Hamilton's). Paris proved his undoing. Myerscough claims that Hayes contracted syphilis from a tart hired by Hamilton. Whether this is true or not, Hayes was a changed man when he returned. When he left America he was a tee-

totaler; when he returned he was a sick man and a drunkard. He called off his engagement to a stenographer in the U. M.W.A. office and hid himself off to a sanatorium where one of Hamilton's pet scoundrels, a K. C. Adams, waited upon him daily with whiskey in one hand and a resignation for Hayes to sign in the other. One day Hayes signed.

John L. Lewis was now President of the U.M.W.A. He had arrived.

Now the question arises, did he bite the hand that pushed him up the ladder, or did Hamilton judge his man correctly when he chose him for a stooge?

Let's look at the record.

Lewis had a chance to prove which side of the fence he was on almost as soon as he came into office. The war had pushed the cost of living sky-high and the wages of the miners were now insufficient to care for their needs. They wanted and needed more wages and they let Lewis know about it in no uncertain term. On November 1, 1919 he called a nation-wide strike of the bituminous miners. Over 70 per cent of the workers responded. It looked like sure victory and the operators were worried. The government stepped in and a Federal judge issued a sweeping injunction against all strike action.

This gave the patriot Lewis a vehicle for betrayal and he ordered the men back to work with his famous words "We cannot fight the government". However, most of the strikers thought differently about government strike-breaking, and disregarding Lewis, stayed out until a slight increase was granted and the operators agreed to abide by the decision of an impartial commission. The impartial commission turned out to be not so impartial and in Illinois the miners refused to accept their decision despite the threats of President Lewis and their district president Farrington. They led an outlaw strike which wrung from the operators further concessions.

Anna Rochester, in her book *LABOR AND COAL*, says: "Another great strike in 1922 was even more openly betrayed. Before the wage agreements expired on April 1, bituminous operators proposed district settlements... A nation wide strike was called, but the day before it began union officials in Western Kentucky (Dist. 23) quietly signed up for a renewal of the old terms until April 1923. A few days later union mines in southeastern Kentucky and Tennessee (Dist. 19) were signed up for a two year agreement. This withdrew from the strike two districts where the operators were in sharp competition with northern coal fields and set an official seal upon scabbing by union members on the striking fellow members. After Farrington broke with Lewis, he helped to circulate the report that Kentucky operators had paid Lewis \$100,000 for letting them operate while northern mines were closed".

Apparently Lewis was still a man who could be "dealt" with. Hamilton's "Man Friday" remained loyal.

It took the miners until 1921 to build up any sizeable opposition to the Lewis regime. It started in Kansas around the case of Howat and Dorchy, two Kansas District officials, whom Lewis had expelled because they had defied the state compulsory arbitration law and called a strike for back pay. They were jailed for this militant action and Lewis took the opportunity to oust them. Only Lewis was allowed to make and break strikes.

The rank-and-file reared up on its hind legs and demanded the reinstatement of Howat and Dorchy who were very popular. But the Lewis army of plug-uglies kept the insurgents from bringing the issue to the floor of either the 1922 or 1924 Conventions.

Opposition to Lewis grew. Progressives within the Union circulated demands which, when summed up, were something like this: 1) The organization of non-union fields; 2) Protested the squandering of money by Lewis lieutenants; 3) Demanded elections that were not elections in name only; 4) Demanded that expulsions of militants cease, etc.

Lewis knew how to deal with rebels and he used every trick in the bag; expulsions, police persecution, strong-arm men, etc. He also started a campaign of red-baiting compared to which, the activities of Willie Hearst are infantile.

The Lewis machine never worried about elections. Farrington, at a time when he was Lewis' right arm, boldly declared at a union meeting:

"I do not care a damn whether you vote for me or not. As long as I carry a card in the Miners' Union I'll be President of District 12".

The U.M.W.A. boasts of as militant a rank and file as any union in the country. Despite Lewis' reign of terror, opposition candidates were pushed forward at each convention. In 1922 the miners pushed forward Alex Howatt of Kansas and Robert Harlin of Seattle against the Lewis-Murray slate. The miners voted but Lewis does not care how they vote as long as he can count ballots. Howatt, who had 90 per cent of the miners behind him was defeated. He also swiped the elections from George Voyzey in 1924 and from John Brophy in 1926. When Brophy opposed him, Lewis officially claimed 173,000 votes as against 60,000 for Brophy. This would make a total of 223,000 votes cast for an actual membership of 273,000, a manifest fraud, as returns from hundreds of locals, assembled by the left wing, showed not more than one third of the miners actually voted. In Dist. 31 West Virginia, which had 377 dues payers, 14 thousand votes rolled in for Lewis. In the Pittsburgh district one third of the locals voting had no existence except on paper. These non-existent locals came to be known as "Lewis' sky blue locals".*

Finally, in 1928, the anti-Lewis feeling reached a point where a split in the union was inevitable.

The opposition, realizing the impossibility of ousting Lewis and his firmly entrenched machine, called the first convention of the National Miner's Union in Pittsburgh.

An eye-witness at this unusual convention gives the following account:

"Every known and unknown payroller of the U.M.W.A., big and little, except Lewis himself, was in Pittsburgh. Every local union mental weakling or slugger, and any person whether a miner or not who would take a few dollars to do a dirty job was there.... Fortunately, none of us had been born the night before....

"The Lewis gang came on with blackjacks and various weapons. They believed an easy job awaited them. They didn't suspect they could be stopped; but they were stopped, yes, and dropped, some of them.

"We anticipated correctly the assistance they would get from the Pittsburgh police, whose superintendent at that time was a former Jones and Laughlin Steel Co. Coal and Iron police chief".

The upshot of the affair was that the first convention of the National Miners' Union was held in jail. An auspicious beginning indeed for what promised to be a militant union.

Unfortunately, the N.M.U. fell into the hands of Stalin's foreign legion and it soon went the way of all Communist unions. It spent so much time in defending the Soviet Union and agitating for self-determination for the black belt that it did little to cement the ranks of the mass of miners crying for organization. After a time, as a political maneuver, it was liquidated.

Official and unofficial apologists for Lewis prefer to gloss over the Lewis of the 20s and make much of the newborn Lewis that came into being with N.I.R.A.

There is no question but that the plug-ugly John L. did have a change of face. Lewis was always a staunch republican. He also had ambitions to be Secretary of Labor. The republicans did not come across with the cherished job so when Roosevelt came into office and the blue eagle hatched

*"Misleaders of Labor" by William Z. Foster

a job for Lewis as a labor adviser in the new administration, John L. swapped horses.

But in order to be part of the new "liberalized" government it became necessary for him to change his complexion to a faint shade of pink. Much is made of the fact that after the NIRA he set out and organized great masses of miners. What he really did was to allow these miners, who for years had been pleading for organization, to come into the U.M.W.A.

John L. suddenly became the hero of the Communist Party and the liberal press. For the C. P. this attitude was a natural outcome of their new line handed down by the 7th Congress of the C.I.; as for the poor benighted liberals, they never can manage to remember what happened the day before yesterday.

But if John L. was to widen his sphere of influence he must set himself up as superior to the other leaders of the A. F. of L., for they too had taken advantage of the NIRA to swell the dues paying ranks of the unions.

He became the apostle of industrial unionism. His whole life he had spent in forcing the most insidious forms of craft separatism upon the miners. Then suddenly, in the A. F. of L. conventions in San Francisco and Atlantic City he became the valiant fighter for industrial unionism. As

a result of the ensuing fight the C.I.O. was formed.

The C.I.O. is the new hope of American labor, we are told. Perhaps we may be excused if we cock a doubting eyebrow. When a tiger changes his stripes he still remains a tiger. A Lewis, with or without stripes, is still to us a ruthless enemy to fought at every step.

Nor do we place any faith in some of his co-workers in the C.I.O. such as the well-known labor fakery in the clothing trades, Hillman and Dubinsky, apostles of class collaboration as the essence of trade-unionism; or MacMahon whose policy in the U.T.W.A. has been suffered for years by a rank and file that has been forced to dual unionism in more instances than in any other union in America; the record of George L. Berry, is hardly sweeter than John L.'s own.

We have been, at all times, in the forefront for industrial unionism and it is for this reason that we see Lewis and his gang as a menace. Real industrial unionism with a revolutionary base is a way out for the working class; the spurious connivings of Lewis and his ilk can only lead to the further disillusionment of the American workers and can act only as a brake upon social progress.

—DAVID LAWRENCE

real wages in the russian city

With the total abolition of the ration cards as a means of distributing food and clothing to the city workers of the USSR, it becomes at last a matter of simple figures for us to determine quite definitely what the standard of living is for the worker.

At the present time (September 1936), the Soviet official figures give the average wage as 300 rubles monthly. It does not appear to an investigator to be as high as this, but it is best to accept this figure, as it lends itself easily to division. The official statement sets the lowest wage at 101 rubles. On the upper side, however, the monthly wage may, and often does, reach 3,000 rubles, while in extraordinary cases it may reach 10,000, 20,000 or even more (this is very unusual, however). The meaning of these figures in reference to our average is sufficiently obvious: by far the greater part of the workers receive between 101 and 300 rubles.

It is best, too, to accept the official rate of the twenty-cent ruble, and we shall do so from this point on, for the purposes of our calculation. This brings us to an average wage for the Russian city worker of \$60 a month, or \$14 a week. This figure must be borne in mind, as it is the only thing which will afford us a real picture of what the living standard of the worker is and must be.

In the table below will be found practically all the food-stuffs now normally consumed in Moscow. Their price has been translated into cents per lb. or 'per unit, using the 20 cent ruble. At the right, the column indicates the approximate ratio between the Russian and the American price for the same material. It is necessary to remember that in almost every case the American product is superior, of course.

| Article | Price per lb. or piece | Approximate ratio |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Black bread | \$.07 lb. | 1 |
| Cabbage | .07 | 2 |
| Watermelon | .80 each | 2 |
| White bread | .22 lb. | 2½ |
| Bologna (not best) | .70 - 1.00 | 2½ |
| Dutch cheese (not best) | 1.15 | 3 |
| Candy | .36 - 3.00 | 3 |
| Plums, small | .27 | 3 |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|----|
| Meats (soup meat to pork) | .65 - 1.08 | 3 |
| Eggs | 1.44 doz. | 4 |
| Fish (bad to good) | .27 - 1.08 | 3 |
| Macaroni | .46 | 4 |
| Butter (fair to good) | 1.65 - 2.00 | 4½ |
| Tomatoes | .27 | 5 |
| Coffe (really chicory) | 1.12 | 5 |
| Flour (worst) | .16 | 5 |
| Flour (best) | .42 | 8 |
| Sugar | .35 - .40 | 6 |
| Potatoes | .16 | 6 |
| Dry beans | .34 | 6 |
| Crackers (sweet-poor grade) | 1.00 | 8 |
| Rice (best) | .60 | 8 |
| Groats | .40 | 8 |
| Tea (worst) | 4.55 | 8 |
| Tea (best) | 7.25 | 8 |
| Dried prunes | .46 | 9 |
| Little apples | .32 | 9 |
| Big apple, Big orange | | |
| Big Lemon | .60 each | 12 |
| Dried peas | 1.80 lb. | 20 |

It will thus be seen that if the worker is to buy anything other than black bread and watermelon and cabbage and bologna he must pay for it at an average of 5 to 6 times what he pays here. He has, however, the following important compensations: (1) His rent is extremely low, not usually amounting to more than 5 to 10 per cent of his salary (\$3 to \$6); this allows him to spend a much greater proportion of the salary for goods than the American worker, who must spend 25 per cent or more for rent. (Of course the housing conditions are of a much lower standard.) (2) He is not unemployed. (3) The whole family works, while children are taken care of by the kindergartens.

But in the category of compensations must not be counted insurance (clinics, vacations, etc.), for premiums for such insurance are deducted regularly from the salary along with voluntary loans, contributions and taxes. In fact, these deductions amount regularly to some 10 per cent of the monthly wage, and deductions of as much as 30 per cent are not uncommon. Therefore a proper appreciation of the insurance factor can be made only on one basis or

the other, but not on both; either the salary is in reality not 14 dollars weekly, but \$12.50 — and the worker is insured; or he gets \$14, but pays high insurance rates out of this.

The prices of clothing and other manufactured goods continue excessively high, and the quality poor. The average proportion of prices for similar items in America is even more markedly different than in the cases above but since quality is all-important in these matters, the comparison will have to await the establishment of a "Consumers' Union" in the Soviet.

It is sufficiently obvious that the average real wage of the Russian city worker is not higher than \$5 to \$6 a

week in terms of our own wages. This in spite of an apparent abundance of materials and foods. That there is considerably more material available now than a few years ago is unquestioned. But it is not more available to the average — and particularly to the below-average — worker. The extra food, clothing and other goods go into the hands of the higher-paid worker, who does not accumulate money, but lives comparatively well and accumulates things — books or clothes or cups or chairs. The discrepancies in salary have been steadily growing since Stalin's speech in 1931 condemning equalization of wages as petty-bourgeois and it apparently is to continue.

—D. ROSENBLUM

JUSTICE AT HOME AND ABROAD

• FROM SIBERIA TO SPAIN

Othello Gaggi, an Italian libertarian, deported to Siberia by order of the G.P.U., demands the right to give his life for the victory of the Spanish Revolution. The case of this revolutionary worker, condemned to 20 years imprisonment in Italy following a workers' uprising there but who escaped and took refuge in the U.S.S.R. is well known. Arrested on the 2nd of January, 1935 with thousands of others as suspects following the Kirov assassination, he was sentenced, without trial, along with his wife, to 3 years in Siberia.

The protests which arose throughout the world against the infamous proceedings of the police regime failed to help our comrades. On the contrary, the infamy was pushed to the extent of refusing to allow his wife to go to the same place as he — one is in Asiatic Siberia in a small village lost on the Colini River, the other in the sand deserts of Central Asia, at Sempolinsk.

To characterize the spirit of the men whom the Bolshevik government is bent upon persecuting and whom it always dubs "counter revolutionary", we reprint the request that Othello Gaggi sent to the authorities:

15-8-36

*"To the Italian Section of the IIIrd International:
Request:*

"In Spain the crystallization of the anti-fascist forces for the defense of the revolution is an accomplished fact.

"The blue blouses of the Spanish Workers and peasants present an unsurmountable barrier to the march of the fascist hordes. The victory of the barbaric bands of France would mean the universal strengthening of Fascism, terror and war.

"We should with all our effective solidarity aid the Spanish people in their heroic battle for the triumph of the social revolution.

"As for myself, after having fought against the hordes of Mussolini in 1921 and having been condemned to 30 years imprisonment, I demand that you, anti-Fascists, permit me to leave as a volunteer to Spain to fight there, and die if it be necessary. for the social revolution".

For: C. I. D. A.
HEM DAY

• ZENZL MUEHSAM

Zenzl Muehsam, widow of the famed anarchist poet, Erich Muehsam, who suffered death two years ago in a Nazi concentration camp is incarcerated in some Russian prison. Invited by Helen Strassova to Russia as a place of refuge

from Hitlerland, as well as to aid in the publication of her husband's works, her free spirit soon incurred the wrath of Stalin's dictatorial lackeys. Did Zenzl Muehsam openly disapprove of certain conditions in Russia? We do not know. There are no direct accusations; no evidence is given. It is merely that "behind Zenzl Muehsam are hidden enemies of the U.S.S.R. who wish to use her stay in Russia to enter into communication with counter-revolutionary Trotskyites". World wide clamor against the imprisonment of so revolutionary and non-partisan a spirit brought the Russian statement the "Zenzl Muehsam was expelled from the territory of the U.S.S.R. for having abused the right of asylum".

Behind all the hypocrisy of the Russian government we note that Zenzl Muehsam has done nothing, but that behind her are hidden "the enemies of the U.S.S.R." It is the victim that pays, not the criminal — the fever of fear surrounding dictatorships runs riot. All free thinking individuals are suspected. Zenzl was alleged to have been expelled by the 20th of July. However, this is merely another means practiced frequently to stop growing agitation. But agitation must continue until she is freed from this "land of asylum" which has delivered Petrini to Italian Fascism and sent Othello Gaggi to Siberia.

These Spanish Communists, fighting side by side with the C.N.T. and F.A.I., should know of the misdeeds of their leaders in the Kremlin, whose orders they follow.

• UNDERGROUND WORK IN GERMANY

In spite of the terrible persecutions the underground movement in Germany is growing stronger from day to day. The monster trials in Wupperthal, Hamburg, Berlin, Dortmund, Dresden and Magdeburg, where hundreds of workers were on trial, bear witness to it. The whole country is covered with a net of secret organizations, the basis of which are the factories. There the underground propaganda is carried on by the so-called "Funfergruppen" (groups of five). In the mines and factories of the Ruhr district and in the other larger cities of the country these groups even collect money among the workers to help the fight of their Spanish brothers.

In 1935 Hitler's Justice has sentenced members of the underground movement to 12,020 years and 9 months imprisonment.

Only in the month of December German Anti-fascists were sentenced to 413 years hard labor and 130 years imprisonment. Among them were:

- 54 Social-Democrats.
- 49 Communists.
- 21 members of the Socialist Workers Party.
- 11 Anarcho-Syndicalists.

4 members of the International Red Aid.

5 trade unionists.

As to the other 20 workers, it is not known to which movement they belonged.

During 1935, 146 workers, peasants and intellectuals were killed in the concentration camps or elsewhere.

In February, 1936 German anti-Fascists have been sentenced to 96 years hard labor (Zuchthaus) and 309 years imprisonment (ordinary prison). Since then the German government has prohibited the publication of statistics of political persecutions. But the monster trials in every part of the country speak a language of their own.

During the last two months a great number of Nazis have been arrested, among them Wilhelm Kube, one of the most ferocious hangmen among the Nazi leaders. It looks as if Hitler is preparing a new purge.

Knowing that the Hitler government does not allow any news from abroad about the European situation, members of the Funfergruppen, among them many Anarcho-Syndicalist comrades, cross the borders of the neighbouring countries very frequently in order to study the foreign press. Then they come back and spread, in the factories, the news they have acquired. Thus the German workers are very well informed about the gigantic struggle in Spain.

During the three years of Hitler's dictatorship the average wages of the German workers have been reduced from 42 marks to 21 marks a week, while the cost of living has increased 18 per cent.

• JUSTICE IN IDAHO

The militant struggle for more wages and sanitary camp conditions culminating in a strike of the I. W. W. in the Idaho lumber regions has not been waged without the usual capitalist violence. A trail of death, deportation and imprisonment is left behind.

Four lumber workers have been tried at Coeur d'Alene for assault with deadly weapons on the person of Ralph Smith, foreman. Their innocence was assailed only by Smith whose testimony excludes all possibility of corroboration. Latest news informs us that the defendants have been sentenced to 90 days imprisonment each.

Shots fired by company gunmen crippled one picket by shattering his pelvis; another had his spine severed rendering him paralyzed for life; while others are still in the hospital of Arofine, uncertain whether they will recover. The timber barons have secured their share of "justice". Martial law was declared in the hopes that the restriction of picketing would produce scabs. When martial law failed to produce this effect Governor Ross of Idaho threatened mass deportations. The workers answered by mass visits to the strike zone. Representatives of the General Defense Committee of the I. W. W. were arrested when they visited the men in the hospital and in jail, and were politely kidnapped and taken outside of the state by the militia. The entire strike committee was deported even though every member of it was a registered voter of the county in which they were taken into custody.

• LINDWAY APPEAL BEFORE U. S. SUPREME COURT

Mike Lindway is in a prison hospital awaiting the results of the appeal by the General Defense Committee to the U. S. Supreme Court. Mike is the victim of a plot hatched by the open-shop Associated Industries of Cleveland and the National Screw and Manufacturing Co. of Cleveland of which he was a worker and militant union member. In an effort to get rid of him the vandal squad planted a stick of dynamite in his home. They broke into his home without search warrant, descended to the basement and without witnesses present "found" the dynamite. If a conviction on this evi-

dence is allowed no militant worker is secure from arrest and imprisonment. We must rally to the aid of Mike Lindway and the General Defense Committee in its effort to prevent his unjust imprisonment and in its attempt to prevent the use of such "evidence" in courts.

• COURT OF APPEALS TO HEAR DEPORTATION CASE

The case of Domenick Sallitto who has been ordered deported to Italy by the U.S. Department of Labor was argued in the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Second District, during the week of October 5, 1936. The case comes on appeal from a decision of the District Court dismissing a writ of habeas corpus last March. The appeal is based on the contention that there was no substantial evidence to support the charge of membership in a proscribed organization. The verdict of the court is now being anxiously awaited.

As we go to press we learn that Ferrero's case is to be heard on Monday, October 19th.

Sallitto, who has lived in the U. S. for 15 years, was first arrested in Oakland, Calif. in April 1934, together with Vincent Ferrero. The latter, also held for deportation has been here for 30 years. These two workers were operating a small restaurant at the time and were singled out for their activities as anti-fascists and because they dared to rent some office space to the editor of the anarchist paper "Man". Both men face persecution and possible death if deported to Italy. Sallitto has a motherless, American-born child.

elections -- the long range view

(continued from page 7)

taking the same form of willful sabotage as it already manifests itself in France and Spain.

The encouragement of the labor unions will lead to an intensified class struggle in which the position of the Roosevelt government will become as precarious as that of Leon Blum. The collapse of the temporary, purely factitious prosperity, made inevitable by the deepening of the basic disproportions of the modern economic system, will intensify the economic chaos and will gradually alienate considerable sections of the middle and petty bourgeoisie now forming the basic support of the Roosevelt administration.

The defeat of the Republican party will also drive the powerful economic groups into the direction of open support of demagogic movements of the Fascist type, which by that time will have learned to speak the language of the masses, to give a distorted expression, in the form of crude, demagogic fanciful programs, to the aspirations of the petty bourgeois farmers and more backward workers disillusioned by the failure of the New Deal policies.

This process is already beginning to take place in France and there is no reason to think that the same situation will not arise here. The Peoples' Front is visibly cracking up in France and it will hardly withstand the strain of a growing social crisis right here in America.

To be prepared for this situation means to rise above the narrow perspective of election struggles. It means to begin building up a strong movement of revolutionary industrial unions, of independent mass organizations of unemployed definitely oriented upon the inevitability of a social explosion coming as a result of an intensified economic crisis. It is from this point of view that we can safely ignore the present day election with its seemingly momentous issues. The latter are only emerging upon the horizon of American life. They will be fought out in the last decisive stage on an altogether different plane than presidential elections.

—SENEX

the new stalinist chauvinism

(Extracts from an article in International Press Correspondence No. 38, August 22, 1936.)

"An Important Manifesto of the C. P. of Italy by Nicoletti".

In view of this new situation, the C. P. of Italy has addressed a most important manifesto to the people of Italy, a manifesto which is of great political and historical significance. This manifesto shows the way to the salvation of Italy and of peace thru the reconciliation and the unification of the whole people — Fascists and non-Fascists — in the common fight against the real enemy of the people and of the nation: capitalism.

"The manifesto says: 'The origin of our suffering and misery is to be found in the fact that Italy is ruled by a handful of big capitalists, parasites on the labour of the nation, who do not flinch from starving the people if they can only be assured of ever-increasing profits, and who are driving the country into war in order to extend the scope of their speculations and to increase their profits...'

'Only the brotherly union of the people of Italy brought about by the reconciliation of Fascists and non-Fascists will be in a position to break the power of the blodsuckers in our country and to enforce the fulfillment of those promises which have been made to the masses of the people for many years, without being kept.'

'The present foreign policy of Italy, however, has, thru the Austro-German agreement, sacrificed the independence of Austria to the annexation plans of Germany, and opened the way towards Brenner and Trieste to Hitlerism. It was not for this aim that 600,000 Italian soldiers fell in the last war — in order to open the way to the Adriatic for German imperialism.....'

"As the manifesto explains the idea of a reconciliation of the people, it emphasizes the necessity of liquidating the quarrel between Fascists and anti-Fascists, the necessity for an amnesty for political prisoners and for the abolition of the Special Court. It then proceeds:

'Let us reach out our hands to each other, children of the Italian nation, Fascists and Communists, Catholics and Socialists, people of all opinions, and let us march side by side to enforce the right of existence of the citizens of a civilized country as ours is'."

We should like to hear Earl Browder's explanation of this "Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist" method of fighting imperialism. Is this part of the new line, Earl?

united libertarian organizations

Two months ago several anarchist groups and I.W.W. branches formed the "United Libertarian Organizations" to help carry on the fight against Spanish Fascism and to aid the revolutionary workers there in every way possible.

The U.L.O. has established a speakers bureau and has been carrying on a mass meeting campaign to show the workers that only direct action can destroy Fascism and to present to the workers the new world being built under the inspiration of the Spanish libertarians. The most significant achievement of the U.L.O. is the publication of a 4 page newspaper, the "Spanish Revolution" which has al-

WANTED: Someone with car in N. Y. to help with circulation of Vanguard & Spanish Revolution by distributing on newsstands.

WANTED: Young men and women to sell Libertarian Literature. Liberal commissions. Communicate with Vanguard, 45 W. 17th Street, New York City.

ready attained a circulation of 7,000. With the proper cooperation of all comrades this paper can become an indispensable factor in giving the American people a true picture of the revolution in Spain.

The VANGUARD, naturally, cannot print news of the day-to-day happenings in Spain. For up-to-the-minute information read the "SPANISH REVOLUTION".

Defend our Brothers in Spain

MASS MEETING

Irving Plaza Hall

15th Street & Irving Place

New York City

SUNDAY OCTOBER 25th, 1936 at 1:00 P. M.

Auspices: United Libertarian Organizations

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The VANGUARD must become a bi-weekly magazine. Things are happening too fast these days. We cannot sit by and wait a month or two before giving our evaluation of the important news of the day. Besides, we have to omit many good articles that we feel you would like to read.

Today marks the beginning of our campaign for a bi-weekly VANGUARD. If we have enough subscribers we can succeed. Therefore the first object of our campaign is:

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